

Mr. Softee is Driving Me Crazy

by Carl Santoro

It is ten days before the 2024 election.

So I am right now alternating between biting my cuticles and sipping a gin martini.

I'm reading Virginia Woolf out in the backyard.

The neighbor is having roof shingles replaced.

Banging. Banging...BANGING!

It is 3:34 p.m.

Sunny.

Windy.

Carle Place.

Long Island.

New York.

I want to write like Ms. Woolf.

I cannot.

No one can.

Except our now dead Virginia.

The martini (stirred with olives)

is delicious.

Suddenly, wind drives Mr. Softee music

into my yard.

Into the yard I have designed for peace.

And now - it swirls into my head.

Can a Dead End street be any more conducive to a

water-boarding song? I think not.

But wait - When? I ask myself, did I first encounter Virginia Woolf?

Oh, I remember.

It was in the car after dropping off the grandchildren

to school one early morning.

I had a YouTube link with a female narrator

reading TO THE LIGHTHOUSE over the car speaker system.

I became hooked immediately, both

to the story and the narrator's English accent.

(read by Ruth Wilson of Penguin Audiobooks)

Wait, why am I telling you this?

For God's sake, dear friends -

it is ten days before the election.

I must get a grip.

Another sip perhaps.

